

Lehigh University Lehigh Preserve

Colombia: From Crisis to Renewal

Perspectives on Business and Economics

1-1-2013

Inequality and Poverty in Colombia

Kirndeeep Singh
Lehigh University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://preserve.lehigh.edu/perspectives-v31>

Recommended Citation

Singh, Kirndeeep, "Inequality and Poverty in Colombia" (2013). *Colombia: From Crisis to Renewal*. Paper 13.
<http://preserve.lehigh.edu/perspectives-v31/13>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Perspectives on Business and Economics at Lehigh Preserve. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colombia: From Crisis to Renewal by an authorized administrator of Lehigh Preserve. For more information, please contact preserve@lehigh.edu.

INEQUALITY AND POVERTY IN COLOMBIA

Kirndeeep Singh



Introduction

Many countries, both developed and developing, are plagued with significant degrees of inequality and poverty, and Colombia is one of them. Colombia has the seventh most unequal income distribution in the world. Its inequalities in wealth and land, and also in education beyond primary grades, are root causes of several critical issues it now faces. The lack of social mobility, though not easily measurable, is one of those central challenges (Moller, p. 2).¹

¹According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, social mobility is the “movement of individuals, families or groups through a system of social hierarchy or stratification” (“Social Mobility”). Social class is a subsection of society in which individuals share a common lifestyle, such as income or career, and a change in social class is upward or downward mobility (Little). Lack of social mobility is correlated with income inequality. Place on the social ladder can be measured by income, wealth, and earnings. Although these three measures may seem correlated, a person’s placement according to each is not necessarily the same (“Pursuing the American Dream”) nor can one measure accurately depict social mobility and income inequality (Winfree).

In this article, I discuss the various techniques for measuring both income and social inequalities, why these matter to the overall health of the Colombian economy, and the various programs that have been initiated to address these problems. Despite all its efforts to combat inequality, Colombia has managed only a slight improvement. Once measured as having the highest degree of inequality in Latin America, it is now second only to Haiti (Moller, p. 3). Dealing with its severe social and economic inequality as soon as possible is a top priority for Colombia (and indeed for all countries in Latin America). As stated by Goñi et al. (p. 1562), “Inequality undermines the stability and legitimacy of institutions and policies, and represents a powerful drag on Latin America’s development prospects.”

What Is Inequality and How Is It Measured?

According to the European Anti-Poverty Network, poverty is measured by focusing on

the standard of living at the lower end of society, whereas inequality refers to the distribution of all resources among all income classes (“Inequality: What Is It?”). High levels of inequality may be symptomatic of a broad range of problems, from unequal household wealth to job inequality, which is why there is no one set way of measuring it.

The most common method used to measure income inequality is the Gini coefficient, which ranges between 0 and 1.0, with 0 denoting complete equality and 1.0 complete inequality. While other countries in Latin America have seen a lowering of their Gini coefficients, Colombia’s Gini coefficient continued to rise from 1990 to 2011, implying an ever more unequal income distribution (Moller, p. 3). Colombia’s Gini coefficient, 0.554 in 2011, was the second highest in Latin America and seventh highest in the world (Moller, p. 2). In a positive development amidst reforms discussed below, the trend reversed in 2012 and the Gini coefficient fell slightly to 0.539. Nonetheless, it still rates among the world’s most unequal. Another ratio used to measure income inequality is the decile dispersion ratio, which is calculated by dividing the average income of the richest 10 percent of the population by the average income of the bottom 10 percent (Haughton and Khandker), so that income of the rich is expressed as a multiple of the income of the poor. In Colombia, the per capita income for the richest 10 percent of the population is approximately 46 times greater than the poorest 10 percent, a measurement that again shows Colombia as one of the most unequal countries in the world. This income gap has actually fallen since 1970, reflecting the difference in workers’ and management’s pay (Soler). According to Soler, “The poorest two-tenths receive only 3.1 percent of the [country’s earned] income, [while] the richest two-tenths take 59.9 percent of the [country’s earned] income.”

Furthermore, since 2010, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has also calculated a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which focuses on deficiencies (or “deprivations”) in education, health, and the standard of living in a given household. The MPI for Colombia in 2010 (calculated by taking the share of the population that is multidimension-

ally poor adjusted by the intensity of the deprivations) was .022 (“The Rise of the South,” p. 5).

Why Do We Care about Inequality?

Edwin Goñi, of the Inter-American Development Bank, and J. Humberto Lopez and Luiz Serven, of the World Bank, claim, “High inequality is viewed by many as intrinsically bad on moral and ethical grounds” (Goñi et al., p. 1558). Poor access to education and healthcare, for example, may have a direct impact on income inequality, which results in increased poverty. When people in the lower classes cannot contribute to the growth process, poverty becomes a self-perpetuating problem (Goñi et al., p. 1558). According to Handley and colleagues (p. 4), who write about poverty reduction in sub-Saharan Africa, “Inequalities in income and other economic indicators, such as asset ownership, are often persistent, deeply rooted and typically a result of political forces that enable powerful groups to protect their wealth, and of market imperfections that make it difficult for those who have low incomes and low savings to accumulate capital.” Additionally, Goñi and colleagues believe that high-income inequality tends to undermine policies and institutions, resulting in unequal distribution of—and access to—resources, including land and human capital. High levels of income inequality may also lead to many other undesirable outcomes, such as more crime and social tension as well as lower rates of economic growth.

Poverty in Colombia

Colombia is the third largest country in Latin America by population, with 45 million people (The World Factbook). In 2009, approximately 45.5 percent of Colombians (nearly 20.5 million people) lived below the poverty level, with 16.4 percent of these individuals living in extreme poverty, lacking the basic necessities of survival (Thomas et al., p. 1; “Colombia”). As of 2012, despite an average annual GDP growth rate of 4.2%, a significant percentage of the population still lives in poverty (Medina), particularly in rural areas. Poverty figures were 18.9 percent for urban residents and 46.8 percent for rural dwellers. A lack of education is

a major problem for many of Colombia's poor, and improving their access to education may help their situation. Since it is difficult to change the mindset of older, uneducated citizens, it is important to focus on Colombia's youth. The government invests only 5.2 percent of Colombia's GDP in education, and while this investment is similar to that of other Latin America countries, Colombia's poorest, particularly those living in rural areas, simply do not have access ("Education Spending . . ."). (For additional information on the inequality of education, see the article by Peter Weigel in this issue.)

A 1994 law meant to oversee the distribution of services and to determine how to charge for them allowed the municipalities or districts to classify people with similar social and economic characteristics into districts or regions of Colombia, called strata (Hudson, p. 102). The vast majority of the population, approximately 89 percent, live in strata one, two, and three, which are considered poor. Stratum four has 6.5 percent, stratum five has 1.9 percent, and stratum six has 1.5 percent of the population (Hudson, p. 103). Thus, essentially only 10 percent of the population lives in districts with well-developed neighborhoods and properly functioning utility services. The strata were meant to benefit the less wealthy by reducing some of the costs of living, such as taxes, and by keeping down the cost of homes, but, ironically, they have also led to an increase in segregation and deterred social mobility (Hudson, p. 103).

Social mobility in Colombia has been low ever since the sixteenth century, and social position today is still significantly associated with ancestry. As Hudson (p. 102) puts it, "Colombia's classes are distinguished by education, family background, lifestyle, occupation, power and geographic residence." Moreover, progress remains a challenge related to self-reinforcing economic barriers. For example, Hudson claims that the lack of infrastructure and developed roads has actually helped the upper class to maintain its social standing.

The ongoing war that began in 1964 between the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) (National Liberation

Army) guerrillas (who claim to be fighting for the rights of the people) against the Colombian government (that claims to be fighting for order and stability) has led to Colombia's large number of internally displaced individuals. According to Solis, approximately 4.9 million people, or about 11 percent of its population, have been displaced from their homes and are vulnerable to violence, abuse, lack of rights, inadequate food, education, and healthcare. However, the actual extent of the displacement is greatly disputed since the rate of undocumented productive reabsorption may be high, thanks to extended families with their associated work opportunities. The rural parts of Colombia and conflict zones harbor the highest number of poor people: 64 percent of men and women living in the countryside are living in poverty ("Rural Poverty in Colombia"), while 22.8 percent of these individuals—declining as of 2012—live in extreme poverty. An extraordinary 71 percent of individuals were displaced by paramilitaries and only 14 percent by the guerillas (United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants). Already impoverished in the rural conflict zones, many displaced families now live in overcrowded and impoverished urban slums.

Programs and Organizations Initiating Social Change

The severe economic crisis in 1999, which was Colombia's first recession since the worldwide Great Depression, had significant impact in Colombia and counteracted more than a decade's worth of progress (Thomas et al., p. 3). By 2001, the poverty rate had reached 56 percent while the unemployment rate simultaneously almost doubled to 21 percent since 1988 (Thomas et al., p. 3). Prior to the crisis, Colombia had no safety net in place beyond a few programs that were unsuccessful and was not in a position to handle such an economic meltdown. However, after the crisis, with the help of the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the Pastrana administration (1998–2002) made extreme changes to the social safety net policy, creating the Red de Apoyo Social (RAS) (Social Support, or Social Inclusion, Network), discussed later (Thomas et al., p. 3).

During the Uribe administration (2002–2010), the Ministry of Social Protection was created by combining three ministries (Health, Labor, and Social Protection) into one. This Ministry became an integral component in Colombia's social safety net program. RAS also had oversight of the Departamento para la Prosperidad Social (DPS) (Department for Social Prosperity). DPS is the government agency that seeks to define policies, create programs and projects for assistance, offer care and compensation to victims of violence, promote social inclusion, and attend to the social and economic reintegration of vulnerable groups (Departamento para la Prosperidad Social).

RAS has implemented three programs: a conditional cash program in rural areas (Familias en Acción [FA]); a program to create employment in the community (Manos a la Obra); and a youth job-training program (Jóvenes en Acción). FA is by far the most successful and largest RAS program, and it is meeting three of the four functions of a social safety net—poverty alleviation, promotion of human capital investment in the preschool and school-age population, and mitigation of idiosyncratic risk (Thomas et al., p. 3). FA is partly financed by a loan from the World Bank and the IADB and has three pillars—nutrition, health, and education (“Evaluation of Familias en Acción”). Because FA is a conditional cash program, families receive monthly grants of between U.S. \$5 and U.S. \$17, conditional on children under the age of 7 maintaining regular medical check-ups and children ages 7 to 18 attending 80 percent of classes each school year (Ayala). FA began in 2001, and by 2003 it was reaching only 300,000 families; however, with positive results from an impact evaluation study in 2005, it was expanded with \$220 million in additional loans as well as a shift in focus from preservation to promotion of human capital. By 2009, FA was supporting more than 2.2 million families. FA's future goals include reducing malnutrition in children ages 0 to 5 from 8.6 percent to 6.6 percent; increasing preventive healthcare services for children between the ages of 3 and 5 from 71 to 75 percent; and increasing the rate of full immunization for children under the age of 2 from 83 to 86 percent (Inter-American Development Bank).

Another international organization committed to social development is the UNDP, which has been working in Colombia since 1974. From 2002 to 2006, the UNDP focused on four main goals: achieving the Millennium Development Goals² directed toward reducing human poverty; fostering democratic governance; overseeing energy and the environment for sustainable development; and implementing crisis prevention and recovery. UNDP's development assistance is modest, only 0.3 percent of GDP. Investments over the years from \$98 million to \$153 million have been made, but surprisingly often most of the funds are allocated to fostering democratic governance, whereas only a small percentage is left for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Recently, however, the UNDP has proposed an important land reform program. Because 1.15 percent of Colombians own 52 percent of the land, more equitable land ownership is seen as a goal that will change the present level of poverty. The UNDP, which has very little direct influence in formulating policy, plans to convert rural land into more structured land ownership as a way to reduce social conflict, generate more jobs and income, encourage greater human development, and devote more space to strengthen institutionalization (Alsema). The UNDP hopes to take land back through taxation and fines rather than repossession. By doing so, this method should encourage the national tax office, Dirección de Impuestos y Aduanas Nacionales (National Tax and Customs Administration), to get involved rather than leaving the task to local tax collecting authorities, who are more easily influenced by local entities who may be considering only their own interests.

Until recently, FA was the main program in Colombia that helped reduce poverty. However, in 2011 President Santos proposed a plan to reduce poverty by 13 percent over the next four years. As his poverty reduction target,

²The Millennium Development Goals are as follows: “Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development” (‘Millennium Development Goals: Colombia’).

President Santos did not focus solely on income; rather, he was the first in the world to adopt the MPI (discussed previously) as his target. The antipoverty strategy the government is now using, as created by the *Agencia Nacional para la Superación de la Pobreza Extrema* (ANSPE) (National Agency for Overcoming Extreme Poverty), is to deploy 10,000 individuals whose purpose is to work directly with families to create a plan that will lead to their income growth and prosperity.

During 2011, the Santos administration passed the Victims and Land Restitution Law in order to help those people displaced by the FARC, ELN, and government conflict. This law “mandates the return of land to people who were forced off of their property on or after January 1, 1991 (as many as 400,000 families)” (Isacson). As of 2013, actual claims have been far fewer, at around 70,000. In total, the law expects to give back two million hectares of stolen land and to turn over four million hectares of unoccupied, government-owned land (Isacson). Additionally, the Santos administration enacted a tax reform, approved in 2012, which increased both the rate and the base of the wealth tax paid by corporations and individuals. The Santos administration is also hoping to achieve equal, universal healthcare across all areas of the country; at present this is only the case in most urban areas. And finally, a reform for royalties from natural resources has improved the distribution of these resources (Moller, p. 4). Through all these efforts, the Santos administration aims to reduce the Gini coefficient by 1 percent each year until 2014 (Moller, p. 7). Indeed, as noted above, Colombia’s Gini coefficient did improve in 2012.

Recently, President Santos launched *Vivienda de Interés Prioritario* (Priority Interest Housing), which is an affordable housing plan. The goal is to build more than 100,000 homes over two years (2013–2015) for individuals living in extreme poverty. The families will receive government subsidies so that the homes will be free. The program—which by mid-2013 was already fairly well advanced except in Bogotá, where necessary municipal government cooperation has not been forthcoming—remains controversial, and there will be several more hearings in Congress before its final approval. Similar programs were successful in Brazil,

Chile, and Mexico, so the Santos government is optimistic that that program will be approved (Glickhouse).

President Santos is taking significant steps toward social inclusion by targeting the 10 percent of the population with the lowest incomes for programs, such as the subsidized housing project (discussed previously) and other antipoverty initiatives (Glickhouse). Colombia has invested a significant amount of its GDP in social programs, more than many other countries in Latin America, and these efforts seem to be paying off. As a result, the poverty rate as a whole fell from 56 percent to 34 percent from 2001 to 2011. Extreme poverty rates fell from 22 percent to 10.6 percent during the same time period (Glickhouse).

An important element in President Santos’ National Social Prosperity Plan was the creation of the ANSPE with the purpose of helping the *Red Juntos* (together, or as one, network), later renamed *Red Unidos* (united network), by permanently taking another 350,000 families out of extreme poverty, many from indigenous populations. ANSPE and *Red Unidos* are responsible for bringing together different programs, such as clean water and health services (Glickhouse). The program has three other goals: to harmonize the strategies with other entities encouraging prosperity and social inclusion; to create a stronger management to deal with social welfare issues; and to facilitate constant communication related to the agenda of advocacy and social prosperity of the national government. By promoting “social innovation, community involvement, and addressing local development traps under the framework of regional convergence,” it is hoped that Colombia will be a country without extreme poverty by 2020 (ANSPE).

The Importance of Tax Reform

A crucial factor contributing to inequality in Colombia (as well as other Latin American countries) is inadequate tax revenue and tax evasion. Currently the tax system is unenforced and in disarray: only 2 percent of working adults pay taxes and even then high-income individuals are exposed to a series of tax exemptions that help reduce the tax base even further. For example, Colombia is only able to raise 1.1 percent of GDP

in personal income taxes, whereas Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, on average, raise 9 percent (Moller, p. 8). These tax exemptions result in an increase in the Gini coefficient of 0.7 percent and cost the treasury 1 percent of GDP in forgone revenue. In theory, tax revenues are used to redistribute income. Since the early 1990s, tax collection in Colombia has risen (Goñi et al., p. 1561); however, tax revenues as a percentage of GDP are still well below international norms. Latin Americans lack faith in their government administrators, including those administering taxes. Only 23 percent of those surveyed by *Latinobarómetro*³ believed tax collection was impartial, and only 15 percent believed tax revenues would be put to good use. As administrators remained easygoing about tax collection, an informality had developed that encouraged a greater shadow economy (Goñi et al., p. 1562). Government corruption is certainly used as a further excuse to avoid paying taxes. However, improvements during the Santos administration (based partly on previous efforts) and extensive tax reforms launched in 2013 may have begun to turn the tide. Although the problem of tax collection may not be remedied immediately, areas of improvement, such as “increasing the volume of resources available for redistributive spending, and improving the targeting of expenditure” should be a top priority for policymakers in their efforts to attain a more equal society (Goñi et al., p. 1566).

Lessons from Brazil

Brazil’s success at reducing income inequality provides not just a useful template but also hope for countries such as Colombia.⁴ In 1989 Brazil had the highest levels of poverty and inequality in the world. However, over the past few decades, tremendous strides have been made in the Brazilian economy. Since the early 2000s, Brazil’s Gini coefficient has been steadily declining, and the number of individuals living in poverty has almost halved. Brazil was even able to meet its first Millennium

Development Goal a decade early by reducing the population living in extreme poverty by half. Income for the poorest 10 percent grew by 7 percent each year. Brazil attributes its success to growth in labor income and the expansion of education, as enrollment in public education increased by 13 percent from 2000 to 2008.

Brazil’s most successful program is *Bolsa Família*, which works to eliminate both short-term and long-term poverty through immediate cash transfers and long-term investments in human development. *Bolsa Família* reaches more than 12 million families; its goal is to eliminate extreme poverty by 2014. The most recent plan is to increase accessibility to such services as education, healthcare, running water, electricity, and sewage as well as to improve vocational training and microcredit. These factors have all helped Brazil prosper and succeed in the slow process of eliminating inequality.

Conclusion

There is no simple solution to fixing a problem as complex as inequality in Colombia. Inequality not only is about standard of living but also includes markets, institutions, policies, and the government, all playing a large role in the current state of the country’s inequality. However, reducing inequality by raising the prospects of the poor cannot be accomplished just with the few programs already in place. The main problem is that these programs target only a small percentage of individuals in poverty or extreme poverty. By targeting only a subsector, such as the indigenous people, substantial progress in reducing overall poverty will not be made. FA and Red Unidos help only 2 to 4 percent of the population, whereas roughly 1 in 3 Colombians still live in poverty. Similarly, ANSPE benefits only about 2 percent of the population. Comparing the percentage of the population that needs help to the percentage actually being helped reveals that, although Colombia’s current and proposed programs are truly making a difference to some, they are not currently on a scale commensurate with Colombia’s needs. Beyond this, deficient infrastructure makes some areas difficult for outside resources to target, so that a portion of the population is untouched by government and

³*Latinobarómetro* is an annual study of public opinion that conducts approximately 19,000 interviews in 18 countries in Latin America, representing more than 400 million people (“*Latinobarómetro*”).

⁴Most of the information in this section is from Loyka.

charitable programs. Colombia needs to enlarge its multipronged program to include better access to good education, programs that focus on work and income, greater access to agency programs, and, most importantly, a systemized tax system.

The solution, according to many scholars, is reformation of the tax system. The steps that need to be taken include simplifying the process of filing taxes, stricter criteria for receiving exemptions, and eliminating multiple value-

added taxes in order to reduce complications (Moller, pp. 10–12). It is too early to tell whether fairly extensive tax reforms along these lines taking effect in 2013 will adequately redress these challenges. But the progress and political will are encouraging signs. To build on that momentum, reforming the tax system will have to be part of a broader set of macroeconomic and market reforms. As Sadanand Dhume has put it, a “rapidly expanding economy is the best antidote to poverty.”

REFERENCES

- Alsema, Adriaan. "UN Proposes Rural Reform in Colombia to Fight Poverty and Violence." *Colombia Reports*. September 25, 2011. colombiareports.com/colombia-news/economy/19217-un-proposes-rural-reform-in-colombia-to-fight-unquality.html. Accessed September 4, 2012.
- ANSPE. www.anspe.gov.co. Accessed October 15, 2012.
- Ayala, Francisco. "Familias en Acción." Inter-Regional Inequality Facility. February 2006. www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/1690.pdf. Accessed January 14, 2013.
- "Colombia." Madre. www.madre.org/index/meet-madre-1/where-we-work-53/colombia-166.html. Accessed September 14, 2012.
- Departamento para la Prosperidad Social. www.dps.gov.co/portal/default.aspx. Accessed September 4, 2012.
- Dhume, Sadanand. "Debating the Tiger's Rise." *Wall Street Journal*. April 16, 2013, p. A13.
- "Education Spending (% of GDP) (Most Recent) by Country." NationMaster.com. www.nationmaster.com/graph/edu_edu_spe-education-spending-of-gdp.
- "Evaluation of Familias en Acción." Institute for Fiscal Studies. January 1, 2002. www.ifs.org.uk/projects/86. Accessed November 13, 2012.
- Glickhouse, Rachel. "Colombia's Social Inclusion Policy Targets Extreme Poverty." Americas Society/Council of the Americas. June 1, 2012. www.as-coa.org/articles/colombia-s-social-inclusion-policy-targets-extreme-poverty. Accessed January 7, 2013.
- Gofi, Edwin, J. Humberto Lopez, and Luis Servén. "Fiscal Redistribution and Income Inequality in Latin America." *World Development*. Vol. 39, pp. 1558–62.
- Handley, Geoff, Kate Higgins, Bhavna Sharma, Kate Bird, and Diana Cammack. "Poverty and Poverty Reduction in sub-Saharan Africa: An Overview of the Issues." Working paper 299. London: Overseas Development Institute, January 2009. www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/860.pdf.
- Houghton, Jonathan, and Shahidur R. Khandker. "Inequality Measures," in *Handbook on Poverty and Inequality*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2009. info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/103072/ch6.pdf. Accessed September 20, 2012.
- Hudson, Rex A., ed. *Colombia: A Country Study*, 5th ed. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2010.
- "Inequality: What Is It?" The European Anti-Poverty Network. www.eapn.eu/en/what-is-poverty/inequality-what-is-it. Accessed September 4, 2012.
- Inter-American Development Bank. "Colombia to Improve Poor Families' Health, Nutrition, and Education with IDB Assistance." August 5, 2010. www.iadb.org/mobile/news/detail.cfm?lang=en&id=7610. Accessed January 12, 2013.
- Isacson, Adam. "Sunday's Local Elections in Colombia." Washington Office of Latin America. October 27, 2011. www.wola.org/commentary/sundays_local_elections_in_colombia.
- "Latinobarómetro." June 14, 2013. www.latinobarometro.org/latino/latinobarometro.jsp.
- Little, Daniel. "Social Mobility?" *Understanding Society*. understandingsociety.blogspot.com/2009/08/social-mobility.html. Accessed October 1, 2012.
- Loyka, Mark. "Inequality and Poverty in Latin America: Can the Decline Continue?" Council on Hemispheric Affairs. July 21, 2011. www.coha.org/inequality-and-poverty-in-latin-america-can-the-decline-continue/. Accessed February 20, 2012.
- Medina, Oscar. "Colombian 4% GDP Growth Exceeds 2012 Central Bank Forecast." Bloomberg. March 21, 2013. www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-03-21/colombian-economy-grew-3-1-in-fourth-quarter-from-year-earlier.html. Accessed August 11, 2013.
- "Millennium Development Goals: Colombia." www.indexmundi.com/colombia/millennium-development-goals.html.
- Moller, Lars Christian. "Fiscal Policy in Colombia: Tapping Its Potential for a More Equitable Society." The World Bank. June 2012, pp. 1–12.
- "Pursuing the American Dream: Economic Mobility Across Generations." The Pew Charitable Trusts. July 9, 2012. www.pewtrusts.org/our_work_report_detail.aspx?id=85899403846&WT.rss_ev=f&WT.rss_f=Expert%20Feed&WT.rss_a=Pursuing%20the%20American%20Dream:%20Economic%20Mobility%20Across%20Generations&WT.z_contenttype=Report. Accessed October 5, 2012.
- "The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World." United Nations Development Program. Human Development Report 2013. hdrstats.undp.org/images/explanations/COL.pdf. Accessed October 1, 2012.
- Robinson, James, and Ken Sokoloff. "Historical Roots of Inequality in Latin America," in *Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean: Breaking with History?* Francisco Ferreira, David de Ferranti, Guillermo E. Perry, and Michael Walton, eds. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2004. www.international.ucla.edu/cms/files/PERG.sokoloff.pdf. Accessed October 4, 2012.
- "Rural Poverty in Colombia." Rural Poverty Portal. www.ruralpovertyportal.org/web/rural-poverty-portal/country/home/tags/colombia. Accessed September 14, 2012.
- "Social Mobility." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/551322/social-mobility. Accessed October 1, 2012.
- Soler, Julio. "Globalisation, Poverty and Inequality." Social Watch: Poverty Eradication and Gender Justice. www.socialwatch.org/node/10587. Accessed October 4, 2012.
- Solis, Michael. "Colombia's Internally Displaced People." September 13, 2010. The Huffington Post. www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-solis/colombias-internally-disp_b_715186.html. Accessed September 14, 2012.

- Thomas, Vinod, Monika Huppi, and Victoria Monchuk. "Project Performance Assessment Report." The World Bank. June 21, 2011, pp. 1–3.
- Trading Economics. June 14, 2013. www.tradingeconomics.com/colombia/gdp-growth-annual%20%29.%20.
- United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. *U.S. Committee for Refugees World Refugee Survey 2001 - Colombia*. June 20, 2001. www.refworld.org/docid/3b31e1608.html. Accessed April 29, 2013.
- "U.S. Income Inequality Worse Than Many Latin American Countries." The Huffington Post. January 27, 2013. www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/27/us-income-inequality-wors_n_2561123.html. Accessed April 29, 2013.
- Winfrey, Paul L. "Analyzing Economic Mobility: Measuring Inequality and Economic Mobility." The Heritage Foundation. May 31, 2007. www.heritage.org/research/reports/2007/05/analyzing-economic-mobility-measuring-inequality-and-economic-mobility. Accessed October 5, 2012.